



## South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



# MESSAGE FROM SDDVA DEPUTY SECRETARY POLLARD — OUR DOORS ARE OPEN

Currently, we are living in uncertain times as the Government shutdown continues. Our Department has begun to receive questions regarding the potential of payments to veterans and their families being suspended in the very near future should this Government shutdown continue.

Unfortunately, our Department hasn't received official word about when this would take effect. The information and guidance from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs has been minimal and somewhat ambiguous. If, the Government shutdown continues into late October, payments to veterans and their families by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs may be effected.

What is currently unclear is when these payments will be effected. There is potential that payments for October 2013, which would be paid November 1, 2013, could be effected. Again, we have no official word. If the Government shutdown continues past late October future payments past these dates could be effected as well.

Due to the uncertainty of this situation the South Dakota Department's guidance is that veterans and their families prepare for the worst case scenario but pray for the best outcome. Until we receive official information or guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs this is the soundest advice that we can provide.

Should you have any further questions please feel free to contact our offices — 605-773-3269 or 605-333-6869.



### ***Inside this issue:***

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| SDNG Supports State in Wake of Winter Storm | 2-3 |
| National Personnel Records Center           | 4   |
| Women Veterans Conference                   | 5   |
| SD Veterans Commission to Meet              | 5   |
| White River Stand Down                      | 5   |
| Upcoming Events                             | 6   |

## SD GUARD CONTINUES TO SUPPORT STATE IN WAKE OF WINTER STORM

South Dakota National Guard members continue to support the state in aftermath of the Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota. Nearly 50 Soldiers and Airmen have been called to state active duty to support local citizens since Oct. 5 and have helped to clear road ways, remove snow and assist electrical cooperative crews with gaining access to locations needing power lines repaired.

More than a dozen other full-time National Guard members have also provided dedicated support to state active-duty personnel in response to the storm. So far, 19 separate missions have been requested of the Guard since operations began. Eight missions are complete and the Guard expects to continue to assist electric companies in power restoration efforts for the next seven to 10 days.

Guard forces and equipment began responding immediately after the blizzard and went to locations hardest hit in Harding, Meade, Perkins and Pennington counties. Equipped with snow blowers, front-end loaders, bulldozers, heavy expanded mobility tactical trucks and humvees, Guard members were dispatched locally and from across the state to help communities dig out from the record-breaking storm.

"Our Soldiers and Airmen are proud to be able to respond to local emergencies such as this," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. "Our service in a state active duty status like this is foundational to what the National Guard is all about."

Across the region, snow totals averaged 30 inches, with some isolated areas recording almost five feet, setting new snowfall records for October in the Black Hills and many western counties. Snow accumulation, along with freezing temperatures and winds gusts up to 70 mph, downed thousands of tree limbs and electrical power lines, blocked roadways and decimated livestock caught in the storm.

Local emergency management officials from multiple counties requested support to the state's emergency management office and the governor, who declared a state of emergency and activated National Guard forces to assist.

The call for Guard assistance came early Saturday morning and coordination began immediately to bring in personnel and dig out equipment. With roads nearly impassable and no travel advised, several Soldiers trekked on foot several miles to reach the Guard headquarters on Camp Rapid in Rapid City to set up operations. Soldiers also trudged through deep snow in the towns of Belle Fourche and Sturgis to begin opening equipment yards. From across the state, Guard personnel from units in Aberdeen, Mobridge, Sioux Falls and Yankton were dispatched to deliver equipment and to help respond to recovery efforts.



## GUARD SUPPORT (CONTINUED)

According to local electrical companies, more than 38,000 customers suffered power losses throughout the storm and reported more than 3,800 downed power poles. While snow removal missions are complete, the Guard continues to support power crews who are working from house to house to restore electricity in rural areas; working alongside them pulling electrical bucket trucks out of the snow and mud after they work on a utility pole.

Guard units providing state active duty personnel to the storm recovery efforts include Alpha and Bravo Batteries of the 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion, 109th Regional Support Group, 842nd Engineer Company, 200th Engineer Company, 155th Engineer Company, Joint Force Headquarters and the 114th Fighter Wing.





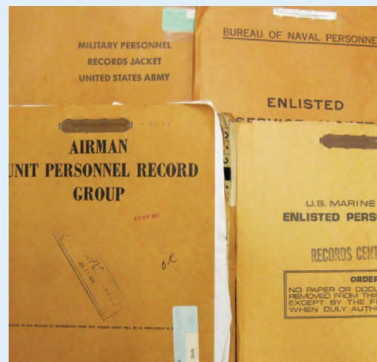
# NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER

Please note, the National Personnel Records Center is staffed and operational during the current government shutdown.

Also, please note that National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St Louis, MO relocated two years ago, however they are still receiving requests for copies of records at their previous location. They ask that you update your records to include their new address: National Archives and Records Administration National Personnel Records Center (Military), 1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63138-1002.

## Obtaining Military Personnel Records

*Get your military service records and awards from the National Personnel Records Center.*



### Military Records

The documents in your military service record can help you successfully compete for a job, get a loan, or prove your eligibility for other benefits. The separation document (DD-214 or equivalent) is the most commonly requested item. It provides proof of military service and grants you access to important benefits and entitlements. Whether you need just one key document from your file or a copy of your entire service record, you can start your request with us right online.

### Medals and Other Awards

The medals and other awards you earned while serving your country are an important part of your military service record. If your medals are missing or damaged, you can apply for replacement of these medals online. In addition, our staff can help you determine whether you qualify for medals and other awards that were conferred after you were discharged from military service.



**Start the process by visiting [www.archives.gov/veterans](http://www.archives.gov/veterans)**

Learn more, read helpful FAQs, and enter your request online.

If you don't have computer access, you can also order your records by mail using Standard Form 180. This form is available at most Veterans Services Offices, or you can order it from us by mail.

### We have moved!

Please note our new address.

National Archives and Records Administration  
National Personnel Records Center (Military)  
1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63138-1002

*To safeguard the privacy of veterans' records, we require those who submit requests for records to certify their identity with an original signature. Because of this, we regret that we cannot accept requests for military service records by telephone.*

## 20TH ANNUAL WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE

The Sioux Falls VA (Dept. of Veterans Affairs) Health Care System invites women Veterans of all eras to the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Women Veterans Conference October 18, 2013 at the Holiday Inn City Centre. This yearly gathering offers women Veterans an opportunity to obtain health and benefit information, network with other women Veterans, and meet VA staff and Veterans Service Organization leadership. Informational booths will be open from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. with the program beginning at 10:00 AM. There is no charge to attend, and brunch will be served.

Keynote speaker is Charnel Hill-George, who served in the SD Army National Guard, U.S. Army and Army Reserves. She has a lengthy list of medals and accomplishments, including being the first woman in South Dakota to earn an airborne qualification. As a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Tribe, she will share the significance of being a warrior and Veteran in Native American culture.

Registration is required for the conference by October 11, 2013. For more information, contact Charlotte McGrath, Women Veterans Program manager, at [charlotte.mcrath@va.gov](mailto:charlotte.mcrath@va.gov) or 605-336-3230, Ext. 7747.

## SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS COMMISSION

The South Dakota Veterans Commission will meet Tuesday, October 29, at 8:00 am. The meeting will be held in the Highlands Room at the Redrossa Italian Grille in Pierre.

The agenda for the meeting can be found at: <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov/aboutsddva/Commission%20Agenda%20October%202013.pdf>.

The Commission will be addressing such issues as residential room occupancy at the State Veterans Home, regulations on veterans using nursing home care, veterans home eligibility, legislative issues, VA claims backlog, and veterans cemetery,

## WHITE RIVER STAND DOWN

Thirty-two veterans and nine spouses participated in the Veterans Stand Down held in White River this week. Stand Downs are a great opportunity for our Department, County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers, VA staff, DOL, and numerous other agencies within the veteran network to visit with veterans and their dependents about the services, benefits and programs that they might be eligible for.

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Bowen, County Veterans Service Officer Gary Sletto (Jones, Lyman, and Mellette Counties) and Rosebud Sioux Tribal Veterans Service Officer Orlando Morrison were on hand to address questions veterans might have with regard to benefits.



# Upcoming Events

BLACK HILLS  
NATIONAL CEMETERY

UNACCOMPANIED VETERANS MEMORIAL SERVICE

**RESCHEDULED**

9:00 AM  
October 21, 2013



## 2013

Oct. 18—1978<sup>th</sup> AQ Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Rapid City  
Oct. 18—SFVAHCS Annual Women Veterans Conference—Sioux Falls Holiday Inn City Centre  
Oct. 21—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (Rescheduled Date)  
Oct. 22—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Sturgis - Veterans Club, 868 Main Street—10:00 am (MT)  
Oct. 23—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Pierre - American Legion, 520 S. Pierre Street—10:00 am  
Oct. 24—SDDVA Fall Mini Conference—Brookings - 520 3<sup>rd</sup> Street—10:00 am  
Oct. 29—South Dakota's Veterans Commission Meeting—RedRossa Italian Grille—Pierre—8:00 am  
Nov. 9—Deadwood Veterans Salute  
Nov. 16—Shrine of Democracy Chorus and the Abbey Road Band—Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn  
Nov. 18—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—DAV Headquarters in Sioux Falls—10:00 am  
Dec. 14—Wreaths Across America Ceremony Wildwood Mausoleum at the Hills of Rest Memorial Park—300 N. Chapel Hill Road—Sioux Falls—11:00  
Dec. 14—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am

## 2014

Jan. 25-26- 235<sup>th</sup> MP Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Chamberlain  
Jan. 31—SD Veterans Council Breakfast with Legislators—6:30 am  
Feb. 8- 129<sup>th</sup> MPAD Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Rapid City  
April 5-6- 152<sup>nd</sup> Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Pierre

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